

1 ☐2 ☐ **I. The Popular Sovereignty Panacea**

- Democrats in 1848:
 - Polk pledged himself to a single term
 - National Convention turned to aging leader General Lewis Cass
 - Platform silent on burning issue of slavery
 - Cass's views were well known because he was reputed father of popular sovereignty
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3 ☐ **I. The Popular Sovereignty Panacea (cont.)**

- Popular sovereignty—
 - doctrine stated the sovereign people of a territory, under general principle of the Constitution, should themselves determine status of slavery
 - Had persuasive appeal:
 - Public liked it because it accorded with democratic tradition of self-determination

4 ☐ **I. Popular Sovereignty Panacea (cont.)**

- Politicians liked it because it seemed a comfortable compromise between:
 - Free-soilers' bid to ban slavery in territories
 - Southern demands that Congress protect slavery in territories
- Popular sovereignty tossed slavery problem to people in various territories
- Advocates hoped to dissolve slavery from a national issue to a series of local issues
- Yet, popular sovereignty had one fatal defect:
 - Might spread blight of slavery

5 ☐ **II. Political Triumphs for General Taylor**

- Whigs
 - Nominated Zachary Taylor, “Hero of Buena Vista”
 - Platform:
 - Dodged all troublesome issues
 - Extolled virtues of their candidate

- He would not commit himself on issue of slavery's extension

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7 ☐ II. Political Triumphs for General Taylor (cont.)

- Free Soil party:
 - Organized by ardent antislavery Northerners
 - Came out for Wilmot Proviso and against slavery in territories
 - Broadened appeal by advocating:
 - Federal aid for internal improvement
 - Free government homesteads for settlers
 - Attracted industrialists opposed to Polk's reduction of protective tariffs
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8 ☐ II. Political Triumphs for General Taylor (cont.)

- Appealed to Democrats resentful of Polk's settling for part of Oregon, while insisting on all of Texas
- Harbored many northerners whose hatred was not directed at slavery as much as at African Americans:
 - Gagged at prospect of sharing new territories with blacks
- Contained some “Conscience Whigs” who condemned slavery on moral grounds
- Free soilers chose Van Buren

9 ☐ II. Political Triumphs for General Taylor (cont.)

- Free-Soilers' party platform:
 - Condemned slavery not so much for enslaving blacks but for destroying chances of free whites to rise up from wage-earning dependence to self-employment
 - Argued that only with free soil in West could American commitment to upward mobility continue to flourish
 - First party organized around issue of slavery and confined to single section
 - Foreshadowed emergence of Republicans

10 ☐ II. Political Triumphs for General

Taylor (cont.)

- Taylor's wartime popularity:
 - 1,360,967 popular and 163 electoral votes
- Cass:
 - 1,222,342 popular and 127 electoral votes
- Van Buren
 - 291,263 ballots and diverted Democratic strength from Cass in critical state of New York

11 ☐ **III. “Californy Gold”**

- Discovery of gold near Sutter's Mill, California, early in 1848, (see Map 18.1):
 - Most reliable profits made by those who mined the miners:
 - Charged outrageous rates for laundry & other services
 - “Forty-niners” chased dream of gold, most notably to Australia in 1851

12 ☐13 ☐14 ☐ **III. “Californy Gold” (cont.)**

- California gold rush:
 - Attracted tens of thousands of people
 - High proportion of newcomers were lawless men, accompanied or followed by virtueless women
 - Crime inevitably resulted
 - Robbery, claim jumping, & murder most commonplace

15 ☐ **III. “Californy Gold” (cont.)**

- Majority of Californians were decent, law-abiding citizens; needed protection:
 - Struggled to erect adequate state government
 - Encouraged by President Taylor, they drafted a constitution in 1849 that excluded slavery
 - Then appealed to Congress for admission, bypassing usual territorial stage
 - Would California be straw that broke back of the Union?

16 ☐ **IV. Sectional Balance and the Underground Railroad**

- South in 1850 was relatively well-off:
 - National leadership: Taylor in White House
 - Had a majority in cabinet and on Supreme Court
 - Cotton fields expanding
 - Cotton prices profitably high
 - Few believed slavery seriously threatened in fifteen states
- South deeply worried by ever-tipping political balance: 15 slave states & 15 free states
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17 ☐ **IV. Sectional Balance and the Underground Railroad (cont.)**

- Admission of California would destroy delicate equilibrium in Senate
- Potential slave territory under American flag running short
- Already agitation in territories of New Mexico & Utah for admission as nonslave states
- California might establish a precedent

18 ☐ **IV. Sectional Balance and the Underground Railroad (cont.)**

- Texas had additional grievances:
 - Huge area east of Rio Grande and north of forty-second parallel
 - Embraced half of present-day New Mexico (see Map 18.2)
 - Federal government proposed to detach area from Texas, but Texans threatened violence

19 ☐ **IV. Sectional Balance and the Underground Railroad (cont.)**

- Southerners:
 - Angered by agitation in North for abolition of slavery in District of Columbia
 - Alarmed by prospect of 10-mile oasis of free soil between slaveholding Maryland & slaveholding Virginia
 - More disagreeable to South was loss of runaway slaves:
 - Assisted by Underground Railroad
 - Amazing conductor: Harriet Tubman
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20 ☐21 ☐22 ☐ **IV. Sectional Balance and the Underground Railroad (cont.)**

- 1850: southerners demanded more stringent fugitive-slave law:
 - 1793 law inadequate to cope with runaways
 - Abolitionists who ran Underground Railroad did not profit from their lawlessness
 - Slave owners were losers
 - 1,000 runaways a year out of some four million slaves
 - Masters argued Constitution protected slavery

23 ☐24 ☐ **V. Twilight of the Senatorial Giants**

- Congressional catastrophe in 1850:
 - Free-soil California wanted admission
 - “Fire-eaters” in South threatened secession
 - Planned to meet in Nashville, Tenn. to withdraw from Union
 - “Immortal trio”—Clay, Calhoun, & Webster—met in Congress for last time

25 ☐ **V. Twilight of the Senatorial Giants (cont.)**

- Henry Clay (73 years old) played critical role:
 - “Great Compromiser”—replayed role he played in Missouri and in nullification
 - Urged both North & South to make concessions
 - North partially yield by enacting more feasible fugitive-slave law

26 ☐ **V. Twilight of the Senatorial Giants (cont.)**

- Senator John C. Calhoun (88 years old and dying of tuberculosis): “Great Nullifier”:
 - Approved Clay's proposed concessions
 - Rejected them as not providing adequate safe-guards for southern rights
 - Impassioned plea to leave slavery alone, return runaway slaves, give South its rights as minority, and restore political

balance

- Wanted to elect two presidents; one from North and one from South, each wielding a veto

27 ☐ **V. Twilight of the Senatorial Giants (cont.)**

- Daniel Webster (86 years old):
 - Upheld Clay's compromise measures
 - Urged all reasonable concessions to South, including new fugitive-slave law with teeth
 - As for slavery in new territories, he asked, why legislate when area not conducive to plantations
 - His conclusion: only solutions were compromise, concession, and reasonableness

28 ☐ **V. Twilight of the Senatorial Giants (cont.)**

- Webster's famed Seventh of March speech (1850) was his finest:
 - Visibly strengthened Union sentiment
 - Pleased banking and commercial centers of North—stood to lose millions by secession
 - Free-Soilers and abolitionists called him a traitor, worthy of bracketing with Benedict Arnold
 - Reproaches most unfair; Webster regarded slavery as evil, but disunion as worse

29 ☐ **VI. Deadlock and Danger on Capitol Hill**

- Stormy congressional debate (1850) not over:
 - North's new Young Guard
- William H. Seward:
 - Strong antislaveryite
 - Unequivocally against concession
 - Argued Christian legislators must obey God's moral law as well as man's mundane law

30 ☐ **VI. Deadlock and Danger on Capitol Hill (cont.)**

- Appealed to exclude slavery in territories with reference to even

- “higher law” than Constitution
- Appeal may have cost him presidential nomination and presidency in 1860
- President Taylor bent on vetoing any compromise.
- Ire aroused by threats of Texas to seize Santa Fe

31 ☐ VII. Breaking the Congressional Logjam

- Taylor unknowingly helped cause of concession by dying suddenly.
- Vice-President Millard Fillmore took reins:
 - As presiding officer of Senate, he was impressed with arguments for conciliation
 - Gladly signed series of compromise measures
 - Balancing of interests in Compromise of 1850 was extremely delicate (see Table 18.1).

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33 ☐ VII. Breaking the Congressional Logjam (cont.)

- Heat in Congress:
 - “Union savers”—Clay, Webster, Douglas—orated across North on behalf of compromise
 - Southern “fire-eaters” opposed concession
 - June 1850, southern extremists met in Nashville:
 - Took strong position in favor of slavery
 - Condemned compromise measure

34 ☐ VII. Breaking the Congressional Logjam (cont.)

- Second Era of Good Feelings dawned:
 - Talk of secession subsided
- Peace-loving people, both North and South, determined that:
 - Compromises should be “finality”
 - Explosive issue of slavery should be buried

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36 ☐ VIII. Balancing the Compromise Scales

- Who got better deal from 1850 Compromise?
- North (see Map 18.3):
 - California (free state) tipped balance permanently against South

- Territories of New Mexico & Utah open to slavery—basis of popular sovereignty
- Nature—“highest law”—not favor slavery there

37 ☐38 ☐ **VIII. Balancing the Compromise Scales (cont.)**

- South:
 - Urgently needed more slave territory to restore “sacred balance”
 - If not from recent conquests from Mexico, then Caribbean was one answer
 - Halted drive toward abolition in District of Columbia temporarily
 - Had to accept outlawing slave *trade* in D.C.

39 ☐ **VIII. Balancing the Compromise Scales (cont.)**

- Fugitive Slave Law (1850):
 - Stirred up storm of opposition in North
 - Fleeing slaves:
 - Could not testify on their own
 - Denied jury trial
 - Federal commissioner who handled case of a fugitive:
 - If runaway was freed, earned \$5
 - If not, earned \$10

40 ☐ **VIII. Balancing the Compromise Scales (cont.)**

- Northerners who helped a slave escape were liable to heavy fines and jail time
- “Man-Stealing” Law was abhorrent:
 - Touched off explosive chain reaction in North
 - Underground Railroad stepped up its timetable
 - Mass. made it a penal offense for any state official to enforce new federal statute
 - Other states passed “personal liberty laws”
 - Abolitionists protested vehemently against law
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41 ☐ **VIII. Balancing the Compromise Scales (cont.)**

- Beyond question, Fugitive Slave Law a blunder by South

- Slave catchers redoubled efforts
- With delay of fighting during 1850s:
 - North forged ahead in population and wealth—in crops, factories, foundries, ships, & railroads
 - Delay added immensely to moral strength of North
 - 1850s did much to bolster Yankee will to resist secession, whatever the cost
- Thus Compromise of 1850 won Civil War for Union (see Map 18.4)
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42 ☐43 ☐ **IX. Defeat and Doom for the Whigs**

- 1852 Democratic nominating convention in Baltimore:
 - Nominated “dark horse”—Franklin Pierce, from New Hampshire
 - Weak and indecisive figure
 - War injuries caused him to be known as “Fainting General”
 - Enemyless because he was inconspicuous
 - A prosouthern northerner, he was acceptable to slavery wing of Democratic Party

44 ☐45 ☐ **IX. Defeat and Doom for the Whigs (cont.)**

- Platform revived commitment to territorial expansion as pursued by President Polk
- Emphatically endorsed Compromise of 1850, incl. Fugitive Slave Law
- Whigs convened in Baltimore:
 - Having won in past with war heroes, they turned to “Old Fuss and Feathers” Winfield Scott
 - Ablest American general of his generation

46 ☐ **IX. Defeat and Doom for the Whigs (cont.)**

- Whig platform praised Compromise of 1850
- Campaign degenerated into personal attacks
- Whig party hopelessly split:
 - Antislavery Whigs in North accepted Scott as nominee but deplored his platform—which endorsed Fugitive Slave Law

- Southern Whigs doubted Scott's loyalty to Compromise of 1850 and Fugitive Slave Law—accepted his platform but rejected candidate

47 ☐ **IX. Defeat and Doom for the Whigs (cont.)**

- General Scott, victorious on battlefield, met defeat at ballot box.
- Free-soil John Hale took northern Whig votes from Scott
- Hale took 5% of popular vote
- Pierce won with 254 electoral vote to 42;
 - Popular count was closer: 1,601,117 to 1,385,453
- Election of 1852's frightening significance:
 - Marked effective end of Whig party
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48 ☐ **IX. Defeat and Doom for the Whigs (cont.)**

- Whigs' complete death:
 - Augured eclipse of *national* parties and rise of purely *sectional* political alignments
 - Won two presidential elections (1840, 1848) with war heroes
- Greatest contribution was to help uphold ideal of Union through:
 - Electoral strength in South
 - Eloquence of leaders Clay & Webster

49 ☐ **X. Expansionist Stirrings South of the Border**

- Spirit of Manifest Destiny revived:
 - A continuous Atlantic-to-Pacific transportation route would effectively sever two Americas (see Map 18.5)
 - British encroachment in area drove governments of United States & New Granada to conclude treaty in 1848
 - Guaranteed American right of transit across isthmus in return for Washington's pledge to maintain “perfect neutrality” on route—“free transit of traffic might not be interrupted”

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51 ☐ **X. Expansionist Stirrings South of the Border (cont.)**

- Agreement led to:
 - Theodore Roosevelt's assertion of American control of Panama Canal in 1903
 - Led to construction of first “transcontinental” railroad
- Clayton-Bulwer Treaty (1850) stipulated neither U.S.A. nor Britain would fortify or seek executive control over any future isthmian waterway
 - (later rescinded by Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1910; see Chap 27).

52 ☐ **X. Expansionist Stirrings South of the Border (cont.)**

- Southern “slavocrats” looked to Central America:
 - Adventurer, William Walker, tried repeatedly to grab control of Nicaragua
 - Installed himself president in July 1856 and promptly legalized slavery
 - Coalition of Central American nations formed alliance to overthrow him
 - President Pierce withdrew diplomatic recognition
 - Walker died before Honduran firing squad in 1860

53 ☐ **X. Expansionist Stirrings South of the Border (cont.)**

- Sugar-rich Cuba:
 - Enticing prospect for annexation
 - Already had large population of enslaved blacks
 - Might be carved into several states, restoring political balance in Senate
 - President Polk offered \$100 million to Spain for Cuba, but Spain refused
 - Spanish officials in Cuba later seized American steamer *Black Warrior*
 - Opportunity for President to provoke war with Spain and seize Cuba
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54 ☐ **X. Expansionist Stirrings South of the Border (cont.)**

- Secretary of state instructed American ministers in Spain, England, & France to prepare recommendations for acquisition

of Cuba

- The three, meeting in Ostend, Belgium, drew up top-secret dispatch:
- Ostend Manifesto—urged administration to offer \$120 million for Cuba
- If rebuffed, then war justified
- Secret manifesto leaked out
- Northern free-soilers rose up in wrath against “manifesto of brigands”

55 ☐ **X. Expansionist Stirrings South of the Border (cont.)**

- Red-faced Pierce administration dropped reckless scheme for Cuba
- Slavery issue checked territorial expansion in 1850s

56 ☐ **XI. The Allure of Asia**

- Could Americans tap more deeply the supposedly rich markets of Asia?
- Opium War—fought by Britain for right to peddle opium in China:
 - Britain gained free access to five so-called treaty ports
 - Control of island of Hong Kong
 - President Tyler dispatched Caleb Cushing to secure comparable concession for United States
 - Cushing arrived at Macao in early 1844

57 ☐ **XI. The Allure of Asia (cont.)**

- Treaty of Wanghia: first formal diplomatic agreement between U.S. and China on July 3, 1844:
 - Cushing secured vital commercial rights and privileges from Chinese
 - “Most favorable rights” granted to U.S.A.
 - “Extraterritoriality”—provided Americans, accused of crimes in China, a trial before American officials, not in Chinese courts
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58 ☐ **XI. The Allure of Asia (cont.)**

- American trade with China increased
- Treaty also encouraged arrival of American missionaries;

thousands came

–Success in China prompted U.S. goals for Japan:

- Japan had earlier withdrawn into cocoon of isolationism for over 200 years
- Tokugawa Shogunate protected Japan's insularity
- By 1853, Japan ready to emerge from self-imposed quarantine

59 ☐ **XI. The Allure of Asia (cont.)**

- President Fillmore dispatched Commodore Matthew Perry in 1852 for Japan
- His four smoke-belching “black ships” steamed into Edo (later Tokyo Bay) on July 8, 1853
- Once on shore, Perry requested free trade & friendly relations, then left promising to return next year to receive Japan's reply
- Perry returned in February 1854; persuaded Japan to sign Treaty of Kanagawa on March 31, 1854

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61 ☐ **XI. The Allure of Asia (cont.)**

- Perry cracked open Japan's two-century shell of isolation
- Less than a decade later, “Meiji Restoration” would:
 - End Shogunate
 - Propel Japan headlong into modern world
 - Eventually into military crash with United States

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62 ☐ **XII. Pacific Railroad Promoters and the Gadsden Purchase**

- Acute transportation problems another legacy of Mexican War
 - California & Oregon: 8,000 miles west of nation's capital
 - Sea routes too long
 - Travel by wagon slow and dangerous
 - Feasible land transportation imperative
 - Transcontinental railroad only real solution

63 ☐ **XII. Pacific Railroad Promoters and the Gadsden Purchase (cont.)**

- Where to build railroad: north or south?

- James Gadsden, minister to Mexico:
 - Santa Anna still in power and needed money
 - Gadsden negotiated Gadsden Purchase in 1853
 - Ceded more territory to U.S.A. for \$10 million
 - Best route for a southern railroad (see Map 18.6)
- In response, Northerners wanted Nebraska organized

64 ☐65 ☐ **XIII. Douglas's Kansas-Nebraska Scheme**

- Senator Stephen Douglas in 1854 sought to offset Gadsden's expansion to southwest
 - Longed to break North-South deadlock over westward expansion
 - Invested heavily in Chicago real estate & railway stock
 - Wanted Chicago to be eastern terminus for proposed railroad
 - Wanted to get South to support his scheme

66 ☐ **XIII. Douglas's Kansas-Nebraska Scheme (cont.)**

- Proposed territory of Nebraska be divided into two territories, Kansas and Nebraska (see Map 18.7)
- Slavery then decided by popular sovereignty
- Kansas, west of slaveholding Missouri, presumably would choose to become a slave state
- Nebraska, west of free-soil Iowa, presumably would become a free state
- Douglas's scheme contradicted Missouri Compromise of 1820 (forbade slavery in Nebraska Territory north of 36° 30' line)

67 ☐68 ☐ **XIII. Douglas's Kansas-Nebraska Scheme (cont.)**

- Only way to open region to popular sovereignty was to repeal Missouri Compromise
- To southerners here was chance for another slave state
- President Pierce threw support to Kansas-Nebraska Bill
- Douglas rammed bill through Congress, with strong support from many southerners
- Douglas acted impulsively and recklessly

–Predicted opposition in North, but grossly underestimated it

69 ☐

70 ☐ **XIV. Congress Legislates a Civil War**

- Kansas-Nebraska Act:
 - One of most momentous measures to pass Congress
 - Greased slippery slope to Civil War:
 - Infuriated antislavery northerners
 - Future compromise would be much more difficult
 - Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 became dead letter
 - Act wrecked two compromises—of 1820 and of 1850

71 ☐ **XIV. Congress Legislates a Civil War (cont.)**

- Northern abolitionists and southern “fire-eaters” saw less and less they could live with
- Ranks of antislaveryites gained numerous recruits
- Democratic Party shattered by Kansas-Nebraska Act
- Most durable offspring of Kansas-Nebraska blunder was new Republican Party

72 ☐ **XIV. Congress Legislates a Civil War (cont.)**

- Republican Party:
 - Sprang up in Middle West—Wisconsin & Michigan
 - Gathered dissatisfied elements, including Whigs, Democrats, Free-Soilers, Know-Nothings, and other foes of Kansas-Nebraska Act
 - Also included Abraham Lincoln
 - Grew rapidly, but a sectional party
 - Not accepted South of Mason-Dixon line
- Union in dire peril

73 ☐